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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION OBAMA'S BID FOR US PRESIDENCY; GLOBAL WARMING; MEETING BETWEEN CHAVEZ AND KIRCHNER; 01/19/07; BUENOS AIRES

11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Key international stories today include Democratic Senator Barack Obama's nomination to the US presidency; expectations that the US Congress will help reduce carbon dioxide emissions; and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez reassuring Argentine President Nestor Kirchner that his nationalization plans will not affect the interests of Argentine companies.

12. OPINION PIECES

- "Obama shakes up the race for the White House"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" front-pages a story bylined by its Washington-based correspondent, Hugo Alconada Mon, who writes (01/19) "The still remote US presidential elections scenario has already been 'shaken up' by Democratic Senator Barack Obama's bid for the US presidency. Black and charismatic, Obama will run for president in November 2008, and could formally launch his campaign February 10.

... According to critics, Barack Obama lacks enough foreign policy experience to run for president.

"... Obama's personal history shows a new side of the American dream. According to John Kein, political columnist of 'Time' magazine and expert in Democratic circles, 'Obama is young, attractive, charismatic and has 'an eloquence not shown by any other candidate so far ... but for..., Bill Clinton.'

"... However, he will find it hard to win the (Democratic) primary elections. Hillary is counting on her husband's election machine, and other figures could give him a surprise, or at least weaken (Obama) enough to leave him behind."

- "Awareness"

Paula Lugones, international columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (01/19) "George W. Bush, the president of the country that is the largest source of global warming pollution, asserted that global warming... was an issue posed by exaggerating scientists and he did not ratify the Kyoto Protocol on the grounds that it might put a brake on the economy.

"The panorama changed - the world is rocked by hurricanes and droughts, bikini-styled winters and polar bears that die as a result of high temperatures. Also, former VP Al Gore's documentary predicted a not-too distant catastrophe in the event leaders do not take quick action in this regard..."

"Europe realized the need to analyze ways of reducing gas emissions. We'll see whether the now Democratic US Congress helps the US join this initiative."

- "Chavez promises to respect Argentine companies' investment"

Alejandro Di Lazzaro, on special assignment in Rio de Janeiro for daily-of-record "La Nacion" writes (01/19) "... The Argentine President and his Venezuelan counterpart had a meeting in which it was made clear that Argentine companies in Venezuela are not running any risk whatsoever.

"The fear emerged when Chavez's new plans to nationalize companies again and deepen his Socialist revolution were made public..."

"The positive atmosphere of the encounter clearly reveals that Argentina considers Chavez a very important partner, regardless of his bombastic statements and his considerations that Mercosur should be 'reformulated.'

"In a meeting with journalists Chavez expanded on his policy on corporations and explained that US telecommunications and electricity companies were under scrutiny. He added 'They are used to exploiting our people, Latin American capitals are something different.'

"The company that raised most concern was undoubtedly Techint, which has important steel investment in Venezuela."

- "Kirchner meets with Chavez and could travel to Caracas in February"

Natasha Niebieskikwiat, on special assignment in Rio de Janeiro for leading "Clarín," comments (01/19) "Nestor Kirchner and Lula da Silva again confirmed their strategic alliance with Hugo Chavez through new agreements with the Venezuela..."

"... A high-ranking (Argentine) government source asserted that Kirchner has nothing but 'gratitude' towards Chavez and that Venezuela is a 'loyal' partner (of Argentina). Chavez himself had let Kirchner know his nationalizations plans in advance.

"... The issue was tackled again yesterday in the presidential bilateral meeting, and Argentines are now sure that Chavez is not planning to include Argentine companies in his plans.

"... Chavez asserted that Argentine companies 'should not be worried,' and that his nationalization policy applied to companies that, according to him, had not played 'the social role' required by law. And he made it clear that US and Latin American capital investment were not the same thing."

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